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SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED ON NUCLEAR TERRORISM CONVENTION; FIVE CT CONVENTIONS NOT YET ADOPTED

REF: STATE 102149

GVN Consideration of NTC in Early Stages  
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1. (SBU) On July 25, Poloff met with MFA Department of International Law and Treaties Expert Nguyen Dang Thang to deliver reftel points pressing for the signing and ratification of the Nuclear Terrorism Convention (NTC) by Vietnam. Thang explained the GVN policy of support for the world community's counterterrorism efforts and noted that the NTC is an important mechanism to enhance cooperation in this area. Concerning the status of the GVN's consideration of the NTC, Thang said information concerning the NTC was circulated among relevant ministries following adoption of the convention in 2005, but no ministry has yet been designated to prepare a recommendation for the prime minister's consideration. Thang noted that the NTC is highly technical and requires the Ministry of Justice to analyze existing law in light of the NTC's requirements. The Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) will also play a key role due to its role in overseeing the handling of nuclear materials. After the Foreign Ministry receives feedback from these and other ministries, Thang said a lead ministry will be designated and tasked with preparing a recommendation for the prime minister's consideration.

Status of Remaining CT Conventions Varies  
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2. (SBU) In addition to the NTC, Vietnam has not signed and ratified four other UN counterterrorism conventions. The Hostages Convention and the Suppression of Terrorist Bombing Convention have been submitted to the Office of the President for final approval. According to the GVN's ratification procedure, these conventions must next be submitted to the newly-elected Standing Committee of the National Assembly for its opinion on whether they require ratification by the National Assembly or whether the president can be authorized to ratify them. Given that the Standing Committee just took office, Thang could not predict when it will take action on these conventions.

3. (SBU) The Vietnam Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Control (VARANSAC), part of MOST, has a project to study physical protection of nuclear materials and recommend legal and procedural measures. According to VARANSAC Director General Ngo Dang Nhan, during 2007 VARANSAC will study the Nuclear Materials Convention and make a recommendation to MOST. Finally, the status of the Convention on Marking of Plastic Explosives is similar to that of the NTC -relevant ministries are considering the document and will provide feedback to the Foreign Ministry.

4. (SBU) Post will continue to track the GVN's progress on signing and ratifying the UN counterterrorism conventions.

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